



Itchen Abbas Primary School – Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy (Updated 2026)

1 Introduction

Itchen Abbas Primary School is committed to providing a high-quality, inclusive RSHE curriculum that equips pupils with the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to live healthy, safe, fulfilling lives in an increasingly complex world - online and offline. RSHE supports pupils' emotional, social, scientific and health development. It helps pupils develop respectful, positive relationships with self and others, demonstrates respect for diversity, and fosters resilience and wellbeing. This policy reflects the updated statutory guidance which comes into force on 1 September 2026. (GOV.UK)

2. Statutory Requirements

From September 2026, schools are legally required to teach:

- Relationships Education in primary schools;
- Health Education (including mental wellbeing and physical health) in all schools; and
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) guidance elements relevant to primary age (e.g., puberty, conception, and respectful relationships). (GOV.UK)

The school must ensure RSHE teaching is age-appropriate, accessible to all pupils, and reflects the statutory guidance, including updated content on respectful relationships, online safety, and ethical behaviour. (The Key Support)

3. Policy Development and Consultation

This policy was developed in consultation with:

- Staff (including SLT and subject leads)
- Pupils (through conferencing and feedback)
- Parents and stakeholders
- Governors

School leaders will review RSHE policy and curriculum every year (working with staff, governors and parent representatives) and revise as needed in line with statutory updates and pupil needs.

4. Definition of RSHE (2026)

RSHE covers:

- Relationships Education – building positive, respectful relationships
- Sex Education topics within statutory guidance – puberty, conception, biological reproduction
- Health Education – physical and mental wellbeing, safety online and in relationships

It does not promote specific sexual activities or lifestyles, but supports pupils to make responsible and informed decisions. The school teaches in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and statutory RSHE guidance, fostering respect for all people and protected characteristics while presenting factual information in an age-appropriate manner.

5. Aims

The aims of RSHE at Itchen Abbas are to:

- Provide a safe framework for sensitive discussions
- Equip pupils with correct terminology and understanding of their bodies, including external genitalia, in an age-appropriate manner.
- Develop skills in communication, respect, resilience, decision-making, and self-regulation
- Promote ethical behaviour in relationships, respect for others, and personal boundaries
- Teach pupils how to recognise and manage online risks, including sharing of images and online sexual content where relevant to their age
- Support pupils' understanding of health, hygiene and changes through puberty
- Prepare pupils for lifelong healthy relationships and wellbeing, adapting to contemporary challenges in digital and social environments (The Key Support)

6. Curriculum Content & Sequencing

RSHE teaching is delivered through PSHE and where relevant, Science, Computing, RE and PE, structured to be developmentally appropriate and well sequenced from Reception to Year 6. Teachers will consider pupils' age, maturity and needs when planning content.

Core content includes:

- Early Years & KS1: positive relationships, correct body parts terminology, personal boundaries
- KS2: managing puberty and emotional changes, respectful and ethical relationships, online safety, understanding consent basics, and how babies are conceived and born

- Online & emerging issues: respectful online behaviours, risks of sharing information and images, and responding to problematic behaviours such as sexism or harassment when age-appropriate and teacher-judged relevant (The Key Support)

Note: Though primary sex education remains non-statutory, the guidance underscores the importance of preparedness and responsiveness to pupils' questions and needs. Teachers may discuss related topics if judged appropriate and beneficial. (GOV.UK)

In PSHE, children will also learn personal safety skills, including recognising hazards, reducing risk, responding to emergencies and seeking help in contexts such as roads, water and railways. In addition, they will learn how change, loss and bereavement can affect emotions and wellbeing, and where support can be accessed. In line with updates from September 2026, children will develop skills to critically evaluate online content, including AI-generated material, misinformation, online scams and other digital harms appropriate to their age.

7. Delivery & Pedagogy

RSHE is taught:

- Through planned lessons within the PSHE programme (<https://www.kapowprimary.com/>)
- Alongside Science (biological aspects) and Computing (online safety)
- Using inclusive and diverse resources
- With appropriate ground rules to ensure safety and respect

Teachers will:

- Prepare pupils in advance of sensitive topics
- Use a range of teaching strategies to engage all learners
- Provide opportunities for pupils to ask questions safely
- Ensure inclusivity for SEND, EAL and diverse cultural backgrounds

The school will ensure that RSHE content is accessible for all children, including those with SEND, through adapted resources, additional time, pre-teaching, visual supports and personalised approaches where appropriate.

RSHE may lead to disclosures from children. All disclosures and safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and statutory safeguarding guidance.

8. Roles & Responsibilities

- Governing Body: Approve and monitor policy implementation
- Headteacher: Ensure RSHE is delivered consistently and handle withdrawal requests
- Staff: Deliver RSHE sensitively and professionally
- Pupils: Engage respectfully in lessons

9. Parental Engagement & Withdrawal

Parents do not have the right to withdraw children from Relationships or Health Education. They retain the right to withdraw from non-statutory sex education elements (where included beyond statutory minimums). Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher. Parents will be informed of content and invited to discuss any concerns. Parents will be consulted when the policy is reviewed and may view representative curriculum materials upon request.

10. Training

Staff will receive ongoing training, including updates to the 2026 guidance, to ensure effective delivery and confidence in teaching RSHE content.

11. Monitoring & Review

RSHE is monitored through:

- Lesson observations and learning walks
- Pupil feedback and assessment tools
- Curriculum review documentation

The policy will be reviewed annually, or when new statutory guidance is released.

12. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read with:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- SEND Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- PSHE Curriculum Statement

References & Resources

- DfE Relationships Education, RSHE and Health Education statutory guidance (effective Sept 2026) (GOV.UK)
- PSHE Association guidance & resources (pshe-association.org.uk)
- The Key: GovernorHub (The Key Support)
- Additional information and Parent form: Withdrawal from sex education within RSE are located in the appendices.

Approved by Governors: **July 2026**

Last reviewed on: **July 2026**

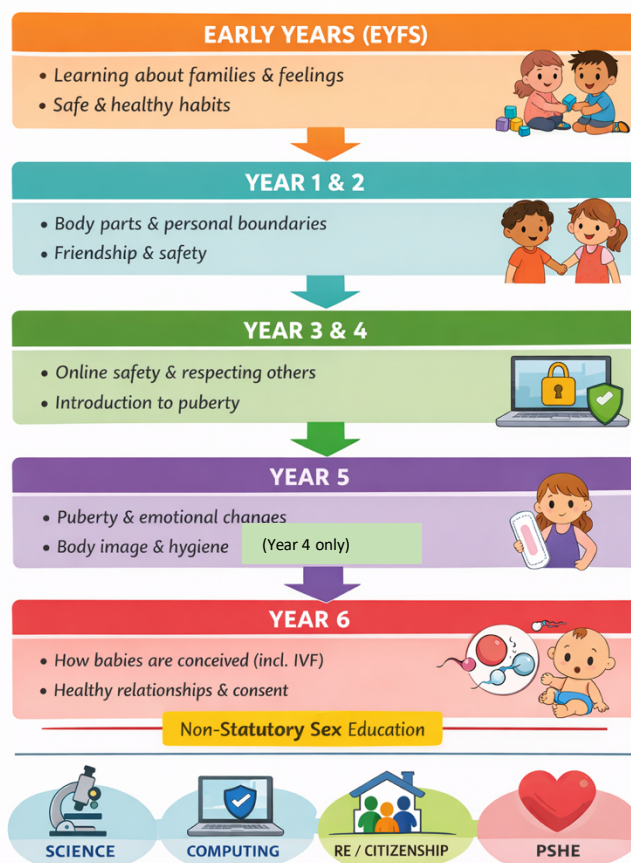
Next review due by: **July 2027**

Appendix 1: RSE Curriculum Overview 2026

Key Features

1. **Progressive Approach:** Knowledge and skills build year-on-year, from personal safety and empathy in EYFS to puberty and conception in KS2.
2. **Age-Appropriate Sex Education:** Only Year 6 includes conception content; parents have right to withdraw.
3. **Online Safety Integrated:** Introduced and revisited Year R to Year 2. Taught progressively from Year 3, fully integrated by Year 6.
4. **Inclusivity & Diversity:** Across all years, children learn about diverse families, protected characteristics, and respecting differences.
5. **Cross-Curricular Delivery:** Combines PSHE, Science, RE, PE, and Computing for holistic learning.

Itchen Abbas Primary School RSHE Curriculum Overview 2026



Appendix 2: By the end of primary school most pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	• That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up • That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
Caring friendships	• How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right • How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	• The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults
Online relationships	• That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met • How information and data is shared and used online
Being safe	• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context) • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know • How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

Appendix 3: Parent form: Withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			
TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL			
Agreed actions from discussion with parents			
Signed:			

Appendix 4: Establishing Ground Rules for the class

It is imperative that all teachers work with children to establish clear ground rules before delivering an RSE lesson. These are not the same as Classroom rules. Teachers and children feel safer and work more effectively if they have decided upon a set of ground rules. This helps to reduce anxiety and embarrassment but it also sets the tone for the programme of lessons, allowing everyone to participate if they wish. It also reduces the risk of unintended personal 'disclosure' from both students and teachers- it is not appropriate for a teacher to disclose personal details about their sex life or of people they know (though some teachers choose to be open about their sexuality.)

Ground Rules for RSHE

- G** Giggling is okay!
- R** Respect what others say; no put-downs.
- O** Okay to pass on a question or activity if something feels too private.
- U** Understand others' feelings, be sensitive, listen and respect their differences.
- N** No personal questions or stories from pupils or teachers.
- D** Discuss puberty topics responsibly outside the classroom.
- R** Remember to ask questions if you are unsure about anything.
- U** Use the correct names for body parts - ask if you can't remember.
- L** Let the teacher know if you want to speak to them privately.
- E** Encourage others to participate and get involved.
- S** Speak for yourself; use 'I' statements and don't refer to others by name or by pointing.